

CDE-Special Education Division

New Statewide Assessment Terminology

The following terms have been adopted to clarify testing adaptations that provide students access to the state assessments:

Accommodation: An accommodation is a change in how a test is presented, how a test is administered, or how a test taker responds which is necessary to allow the student to participate in the test but **does not fundamentally alter what the test measures or affect the comparability of scores.**

Modification: A modification is a change in how a test is presented, how a test is administered, or how the test taker is allowed to respond **that fundamentally alters what the test measures or affects the comparability of scores.**

In order to maintain consistency across the major state assessments, testing adaptations have been classified as either accommodations or modifications. The paper-and-pencil tests generally allow the same test adaptations. Variations arise when tests measure different constructs. Accommodations are separated into two categories: Category 1 accommodations are available to all students who regularly use them in the classroom and Category 2 accommodations are available only to those students with disabilities who have the accommodation documented in their Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plans. Modifications are labeled as category 3 and are available only to students with disabilities who have the modification documented in their IEP or 504 plans.

Category 1 accommodations may be described as flexibility in administration and do not alter what is measured by the test. These accommodations may be **provided to any student who uses the accommodation regularly for classroom instruction and/or assessment.**

Category 2 accommodations are allowed **only for students with disabilities who have them documented in their IEP or 504 Plan.** The accommodations should be similar to those used by the student for classroom instruction and/or classroom assessment. In general, Category 2 accommodations require a more significant alteration in presentation, timing/scheduling, setting, or response and, in most cases, require more preplanning in order to ensure the availability of needed resources.

Category 3 signals that the test adaptation is considered a modification, or it alters what the test measures. Test modifications are **available only to students with disabilities who have the modification documented in their IEP or 504 Plan. Modifications should only be used when other accommodations have been considered and it is determined that the student does not have adequate access to the test without the modification.**

Test adaptations in Categories 1, 2 and 3 must be documented in the IEP or 504 Plans for students with disabilities who need them to access the test and minimize the impact of their disability on their test performance.

See: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/documents/matrix5.pdf> - Matrix of test variations, accommodations and modifications for California statewide assessments

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/sr/cntntstnd.asp> - California Content Standards for CAPA